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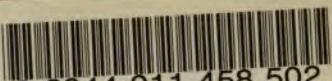
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The Formative Period
OF
English Familiar Letter-writers
AND
Their Contribution
TO THE
English Essay

A THESIS

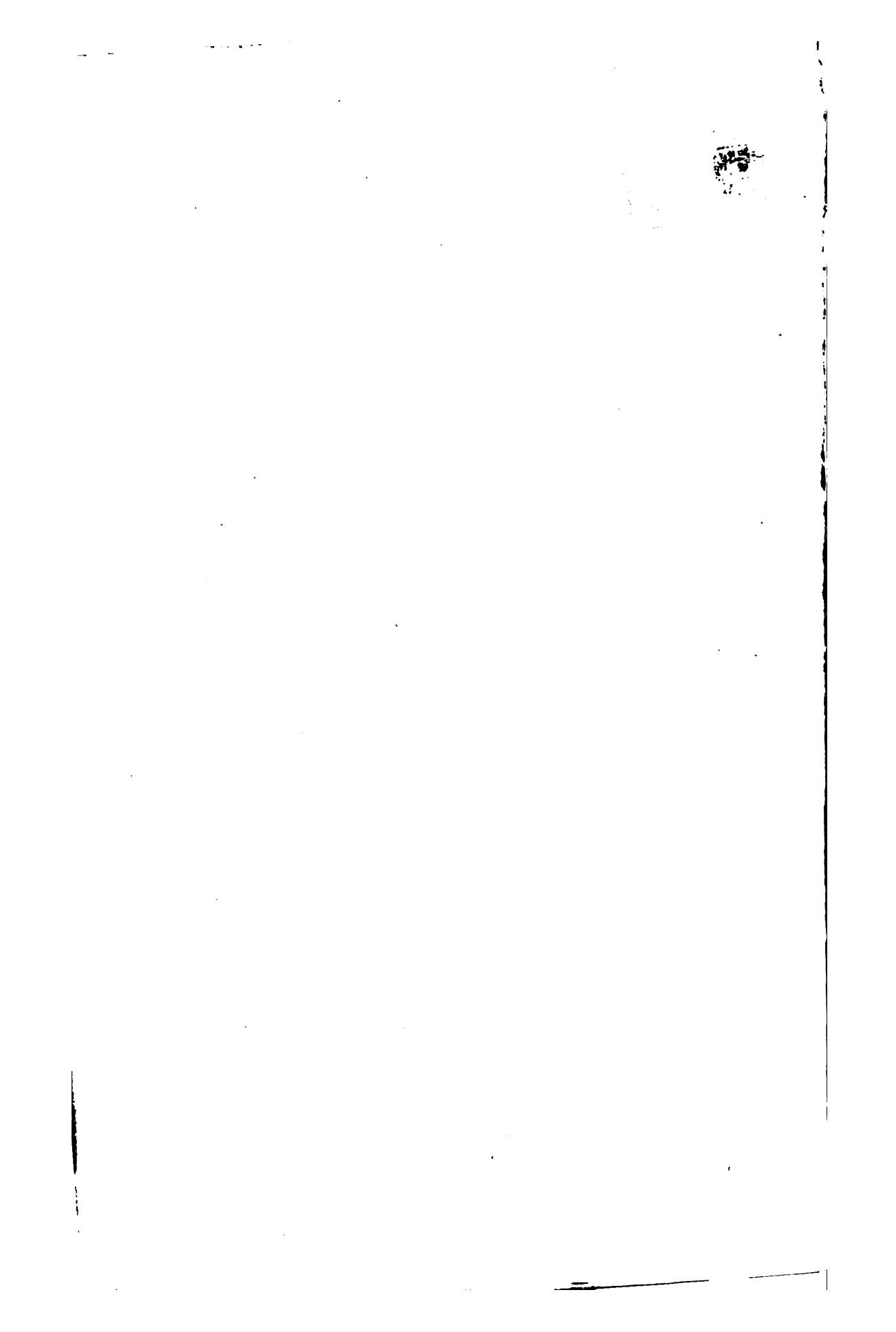
Presented to the Faculty of the Department of Philosophy of the
University of Pennsylvania

BY

MAUDE BINGHAM HANSCHE

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PHILADELPHIA
1902



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Prof. Charles H. Sanderson

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THE commencement of the eighteenth century was distinguished by the appearance of a group of prose essay and letter writers. Their wit, elegance and taste were so eminent that they contributed largely to the naming of the period in which they wrote, The Augustian Age of English Literature. Hand-books of prose literature are apt to treat this period as quite detached. No literary form springs fully perfected into popular favor from the pen of one author. All literature is a development in the hands of successive writers moulded to meet the passing demands of readers. Therefore, it is necessary to go back of this immediate period to the prose literature of the earlier Stuarts and the Commonwealth. The mass of epistolary literature contained within these periods is surprisingly great. An attempt will be made to explain why the letter was such a popular form. Also, to call attention to it as a forebear of the essay; and to indicate some of the elements which it has contributed to the essay in particular, and to later literature in general.

The history of letter writing has been several times essayed.* Most of these works are deficient in themselves, and not mutually supplementary one to the other. None of these attempt an analysis of the art of letter writing. They are often merely compilations of letters. It may be doubted if any treatise dealing with the historical development of the art of letter-writing, or presenting an adequate compilation of specimens selected chronologically exists. Nor is any attempt to analyze the letters representative of successive centuries or to designate distinguishing qualities with reference to tendencies of the time made in any existing work on the subject.

In most histories of English prose literature a short paragraph is allotted to the notable specimens of English epistolary writing. The Paston Letters and Howell's Letters are commonly mentioned as typical of the art in these earlier periods. Let us compare an extract from each of these.†

"To my right worshipful cousin, John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered.

Right worshipful and reverend cousin, I recommend me unto you with all mine heart as your faithful kinsman and orator, desiring to hear of the good prosperity and welfare of your worshipful mother my lady and cousin, with your wife, Sir John Paston, your brethren William and Clement, with all your sons and daughters, to whom I beseech you heartily that I may be recommended. God of his high mercy preserve you all unto his mercy and grace, and save you from all adversity.

Worshipful cousin, my special writing and heart's desire before rehearsed, nature naturally so me compelleth.

* A History of Letter Writing, Wm. Roberts, 1843.
English Letters and Letter Writers, Williams.

Four Centuries of Letters, Scoones.

† Letter CCXXIII, p. 175. Fenn, Bohn Edition.

What though I be put far out of conceit and sight,
 I have you all in remembrance both day and night ;
 beseeching you, gentle cousin, to tender my writing, I take
 God to my witness I would as fain do that might be unto
 you honour, worship, and profit as any earthly man can think.

Wherefore now late died the abbot of our monastery,
 and left us in great debt ; the bringer hereof is my special
 friend. The oldest brother in our place never heard nor saw
 our church in that misery that (it) is now ; we have cast the
 perils amongst us, and there is none other help, but every
 brother that hath any worshipful kin or friend, every man
 do his part to the welfare and succour and relief of our
 monastery.

Therefore, worshipful cousin, I, a brother of that worship-
 ful kin or friends, every man to do his part to the welfare, and
 succour, and relief of our monastery.

Therefore, worshipful cousin, I, a brother of that worship-
 ful monastery wherein begun the faith of all this land, meekly
 beseecheth you in the reverence of Almighty God, to render
 help, and succour us in our great necessity ; for in London lieth
 to wad (pawn) many rich jewels of ours, with other great
 debts, which my brother will inform you of.

Pleaseth your goodness, for God's sake, and all the saints
 of heaven, and as my simple request, to have compassion
 upon us, ye having due surety both in obligations and pledges.

In the reverence of Almighty God do your alms and
 charity ; it shall cause you to be prayed for, and all your kin
 as long as the church standeth ; and by this means, I trust to
 Almighty God, to see my cousin William, or Clement, to be
 steward of our lands, and to have an interest in Kent, to
 the worship of God and you all, which ever have you in his
 keeping. Amen.

Written at Canterbury in haste the 28th day of January
 1463 or 1464.

Also I beseech you to show the bringer of this letter

some humanity and worship, that when he cometh home he may report as he findeth. This is the cause every-while and they put my kin in my beard, saying, I come of lords, knights, and ladies. I would they were in your danger 1000 marks that they might know you, etc.

By your cousin and beadman,

HENRY BERRY."

" To Richard Altham,* Esq.

DEAR SIR :—I was plung'd in a deep fit of melancholy, Saturn had cast his black influence o'er all my intellectuals, methought I felt my heart as a lump of dough, and heavy as lead within my breast ; when a letter of yours of the 3rd of this month was brought me, which presently begot new spirits within me, and made such a strong impression upon my intellectuals, that it turn'd and transform'd me into another man. I have read of a Duke of Milan and others, who were poisoned by reading of letter; but yours produced contrary effect in me, it became an antidote, or rather a most sovereign cordial to me, more operative than Bezoar, of more virtue than portable Gold, or the Elixir of Amber, for it wrought a sudden cure upon me : that fluent and rare mixture of love and wit, which I found up and down therein, were the ingredients of this cordial ; they were as so many choice flowers strew'd here and there, which did cast such an odoriferous scent, that they reviv'd all my senses and dispell'd those dull fumes which had formerly o'er-clouded my brain : such was the operation of your most ingenious and affectionate letter, and so sweet an entertainment it gave me. If your letter had that virtue what would your Person have done ? and did you know all, you would wish your person here awhile ; did you know the rare beauty of this virgin city, you would quickly make love to her, and change your Royal Exchange

* Epistolae, Ho-Elianae. J. Howell, Jacobs. Book I., No. xxxii., p. 73.

for the Rialto, and your Gray's-Inn-walks for St. Mark's-place for a time. Farewell, dear child of virtue, and minion of the muses, and love still. Yours, J. H.

Ven., July, 1621."

These are representative letters of the two collections. It is plain that they differ as materially in character and style as they differ in subject matter. What quality pervades Howell's letters and makes them distinctive? Were there contrasted literary forces operating at these different periods that would account for such differences?

The letters of the Paston collection are not familiar letters. They belong to that large group of letters which concern public affairs, commerce or business of state.* Such letters are valuable historically, not for literary purposes. Aside from the subject treated they lack the individual quality which is so present and so pervasive in Howell. They are formal, Howell is genial. In the Paston letters there is conventional salutation, the conventional introduction of the subject, narration, and conventional subscription. Howell is free from conventionality and formality; there is an evident effort towards novelty, and an attempt to express the message in as varied a manner as possible. This quality of conventionality is by no means limited to the Paston letters. It appears in the specimens of letters of earlier times, and continues until the literary men of the reign of Queen Elizabeth utilized the letter form in literature.

Two questions arise here. Was this earlier form an English growth, or did it have a foreign origin? And why was the earlier and more conventional form changed? Both of these are questions that may be answered. Epistolary conventionality was no more an English characteristic than the

* The Ellis Collection, and Calender State Papers, are notable collections of such letters.

art of book writing was English. England shared with the Continent forms of intercourse, familiar, diplomatic and religious. The crude and stilted forms of earlier letters were changed because, during the latter half of the sixteenth century, England became interested in the study of language and the art of expression.*

This change took one particular form because England was then going to school, as all Europe had done, to Italy. Let us for the present ignore the proof of the first assertion, as it will appear immediately connected with the discussion of the second. We may presuppose that it was the work of the period immediately preceding and contemporary which influenced these imitators.

England followed Italy and Europe in every literary form, and the form most utilized in prose, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was that of the Letter.† One instinctively feels that there must have existed some cause for such popularity and some reason for this persistence of form, even when modified by individual and national traits. The collections of letters in the Latin countries are the product of the humanist movement which applied to modern conditions a careful study of the past. It is in those countries that we find forms of the widest divergence for comparison. The next step backward is into the work of the Middle Ages, in Italy. It is with such traces as exist of this literature, or

* Thomas Wilson's Art of Rhetoric, 1553 and 1562. Second edition, 1567.

Fulwood's The style and manour of inditynge any manour of epistle or letters to all Degrees and states. 1566-67.

Abraham Fleming's A Panoply of Epistles, * * * etc. 1576.
Gabriel Harvey, Rhetor. 1577.

Angel Day, English Secretary, eight editions between 1586 and 1635.

Examples may be multiplied ; see the bibliography compiled from Stationers' Register.

† See the Collections in the Bibliography following this Thesis.

critical work done therein, that we are concerned ; ignoring any earlier school, except in as far as they form the basis of the early Italian study. It has become possible within the latter half of the nineteenth century to treat this variety of the letters of the Middle Ages, scientifically and methodically. Three scholars of our own day, M. L. Rockinger, M. Ch. Thurot, and M. Noël Valois, have made such a study possible.*

It is easy to turn to the writers of letters in Italy, France and Spain, and to say the writers of this nation favored the style of Seneca, and of the others, the style of Cicero. But the question arises was there no intermediate stage between the Romans and these writers of the close of the Middle Ages and Renaissance ; can we confidently say that the men of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries directly imitated the Romans ? Those who have read the letters of the Humanists recognize a constraint never obtained from a direct and unmodified study of the classics. For example, compare the following selection from the *Colloquies* of Erasmus with a letter of Cicero.

* M. L. Rockinger has written an excellent memoir upon the instruction of the Art of Epistolis in the Italy of the North during the second half of the twelfth century.

Sitzungsberichte d. klager Acad. der Wissenschaften, 1861. He has rendered an even greater service by publishing in 1863 in a massive volume of 1200 pages, extracts, accompanied by historical and critical notices, of the Manuscripts of *dictamina* from some German libraries.

Briefsteller und Formelbücher des XI bis XIV. Jahrh.

aus quellen sur bayer. und deutsch. Geschichte, Munich, 1863. IX. in—8. Rockinger does not pretend to give a complete list of all *dictamina* preserved.

M. Ch. Thurot has published some fragments of *Artes dictaminis* of the *Bibliothèque nationale of Paris*.

M. Noël Valois has written a dissertation, a little superficial ; *De arte scribendi epistolas apud gallicos mediæ aevii scriptores rhetoresce*, Paris 1880, in—8.

"A certain person* teaches, and not without reason, that we should salute freely. For a courteous and kind salutation oftentimes engages friendship, and reconciles persons at variance, and does undoubtedly nourish and increase a mutual benevolence. There are indeed some persons that are such churls, and of so clownish a disposition, that if you salute them, they will scarcely salute you again. But this vice in some persons is rather the effect of their education, than their natural disposition.

It is a piece of civility to salute those that come in your way; either such as come to us, or those that we go to speak with, and in like manner as are about any work." * * *

Here follow forms of salutation, and there follow directions :

" How we ought to congratulate one that is returned from a journey.

Sat. We are glad you are come home. It is a pleasure that you came home safe. It is a pleasure to us that you are come well home. We congratulate your happy return. We give God thanks that you are come safe home to us.

Ans. I am glad, too, that as I am well myself, I find you so. I am very glad to find you in good health. I should not have thought myself well come home if I had not found you well; but now I think myself safe, in that I see you safe and in good health." †

* Cato.

† Colloquies, p. 1, Bailey's Translation. London, 1733.

With this compare the following letter to CURIUS :

" Your letter affords me a very evident proof that I possess the highest share of your esteem, and that you are sensible how much you are endeared to me in return, both which I have ever been desirous should be placed beyond a doubt. Since, then, we are thus firmly assured of each other's affection ; let us endeavor to vie in our mutual good offices a contest in which I am perfectly indifferent on which side the superiority may appear.

I am well pleased that you had no occasion to deliver my letter to Acilius. I find, likewise, that you had not much for the services of Sulpicius, having made so great a progress, it seems, in your affairs, as to have curtailed them (to use your own expression), both of head and feet. I wish you had spared the latter that they might proceed a little faster and give us an opportunity of one day seeing you again in Rome. We want you, indeed, in order to preserve that good old vein of pleasantry, which is now, you may perceive, well-nigh worn out amongst us, inasmuch that Atticus may properly enough say, as he often, you know, used, " If it were not for two or three of us, my friends, what would become of the ancient glory of Athens ?" Indeed, as the honour of being the chief support of Attic elegance, devolved upon Pomponius, when you left Italy, so, in his absence, it has now descended upon me. Hasten your return, then, I beseech you, my friend, lest every spark of wit, as well as liberty, should be irrecoverably extinguished with the republic." * FAREWEL.

Aside from the style another quality is marked in Erasmus ; *i. e.*, didacticism. His *Colloquies* are primarily to instruct, to furnish models as did the *Conscribendis Epistles*. The explanation for this restraint and didactic form is to be

* Cicero. Letter III : p. 79, Book XII, Vol. 3, Melmoth's Translation. London, 1804.

found in a consideration of that body of rules known as the *Ars Dictaminis*, which we may English by the term of the day "formulary."*

A study of the *Ars Dictaminis* shows that the art of writing was taught by a number of carefully formulated rules; that it was considered a branch of rhetoric and naturally was most treated at those schools devoted to such studies; and as the spoken word was carefully chosen and subjected to rules for classification, so the written word was modeled upon the same line of thought. These rules were unchangeable and were expounded by *professores artis dictaminis*. The collections of formularies served as primers to the ignorant and unskilful, while the theories of this art were expounded by these professors from their own manuals to the more advanced pupils in the universities.†

Two limitations of this art assist us in determining its first great expounder, which in turn helps to explain its close connection with rhetoric. The churchmen were the only educators. They had in their possession the classics, and in their position of teachers, they organized the rules supposed to have given the Latin epistolary style, or formulated rules of their own from the practice of the Latin writers. As these latter were simply a part of a grammatical or rhetorical training, it was to be expected that the body of churchmen where such traditions were strong, would be the first to formulate such rules, or the most influential in practicing and upholding them. Such was what really did happen. By the eleventh century a systematic treatment of the subject known as the *ars dictandi*, or *ars dictaminis*, appeared in the monastery of Monte Cassino, where grammatical traditions had always been very strong.

* These rules were published by M. S. Rockinger in 2 Vols. 1864.

† *Briefsteller und formelbücher.* p. XXIV., ff.

The love of the Italians, and particularly the Lombardians, for rhetorical and law studies, probably greatly assisted the growth of this art. It was a Lombardian, and an inmate of this monastery of Monte Cassino, Alberich, who flourished about 1075, ~~who~~ was chief of this school. His work seems to have given several essential characteristics to this *ars dictaminis*; that is, he has left us a complete set of rules, in which he discusses the *rationes dictandi*, what *dictamines* are, defines *epistole*, names the five parts necessary, and sets down a large number of rules governing each of these parts. These rules were formulated more or less upon theories, but depended largely upon practical examples. The following is a short summary of Alberich's treatment of this subject:

Every *epistole* must have five chief divisions, namely: the *salutatio* or the introduction to a fixed greeting; the *benevolentia captatio* or the form and method of producing a favorable impression upon the receiver of the writing; *narratio*, properly may follow, or may present the *petitio*, which according to the context of the communication occurs here or precedes certain requests and claims or commands; these claims or commands may be presented in the *conclusio*, or the proper conclusion of the foregoing.*

These rules were made for prose letters, for rythmical and metrical letters; and as various additions were made by successive writers the rules were extended to every conceivable subject. They fixed the forms of letters of indulgences, land grants, letters patent, citation of delegates, and of privileges, even the salutation between parent and child.

It was from these formulary books that Erasmus derived his codification of letter forms arranged according to treat-

*For further special treatment of the parts of the letter according to Alberich's theories, see Rockinger, Vol. I. Introduction, page VIII, note 3.

ment, and embodied with the rules in his *de conscribendis epistoles.*

The following table is a scheme of classification of various kinds of letters as adopted by Erasmus, Vives, Melchior, Junius or Lipsius, and derived from the formulary books.*

TYPUS GENERUM EPISTOLARUM.	
E	I Didascalicum :
P	1 Commendatitiæ
I	2 Communicatoriæ
S	3 Cohortatoriæ : Suasoriæ quo pertinent : Dissuasoriæ
T	4 Petitoriae
O	II Deliberativum :
L	5 Consolatoriæ
Æ	6 Officiosæ
R	7 Conciliatoriæ
E	8 Mandatoriæ
F	III Demonstrativum :
E	1 Gratulatoriæ
R	2 Laudatoriæ
U	3 Reprehensoriæ
N	4 Gratiarum actiones
T	5 Nuncupatoriæ seu Dedica-
U	toriæ
R	
A	IV Judiciale :
D	1 Accusatoriæ seu Expostula-
G	toriæ
E	2 Querulæ Inidignatoriæ
N	3 Comminatoriæ
U	
S	V Familiare seu extraordinarium: ut 3
	1 Nunciatoriæ
	2 Denunciatoriæ
	3 Enigmaticæ
	4 Jocosæ

*Preface to *Elegant Epistles.* Knox. London, 1794.

After the early organization of these rules scarcely any new features appeared. During the twelfth century the code of letter writing was supreme in Italy, required of every student of *belles lettres* in the University of Bologne, and taught in all southern Europe. The makers of these rules had accepted from the Latin writers, ready made forms of address, and hard and fast lines of division between parts of letters. They were far from attempting to imitate the easy or familiar style which became the object of the writers of the Renaissance. The same desire for individuality which freed students from fixed precepts of rhetoric, also led them to ignore the manuals which appeared almost annually during the early period of the Renaissance. By the close of the thirteenth century students fell into the habit of selecting some favorite classical author as a model. Such a one was Guittone d'Arezzo, who is reported to have accepted Seneca as his model and is the first to treat the vulgar tongue thus rhetorically; such a one, too, was Gasparini da Barzizze Bargame, the earliest Italian writer to cultivate a familiar style. This he is said to have done by a close imitation of the classics and by an especial study of Cicero's letters. This imitation culminated in the affectation of the Ciceronian purists.

By the sixteenth century the familiar letter was a very popular form in Italy. Aretino's and Bembo's familiar letters were considered examples of incomparable elegance and many times republished. Indeed during this century and the following one the art of composition and the publication of familiar letters formed a lucrative and productive branch of literary activity in Italy. Notable collections of this class are those of La Casa, Caro, Manutius, Tasso, and Bonsadio. Many copies and editions of these Italian formularies are preserved in the British Museum and in the Bodleian Library; and they were very popular in England. In addition to the above there were miscellanies published under various titles, of which *Lettere Scritte al Signor Pietro Aretino*, and the

Lettere Diverse, in three books (Aldus, 1567); are good examples.

These publications may be characterized in a few sentences. Most of the examples were of the familiar letter, a natural outgrowth of the brilliant society of Florence, Rome, and other Italian towns, which carried the quality of their playful humorous conversation into their letters. As mentioned above, many were intended to be published, and have lost much of the candor of the average writer, and they are often particularly affected when addressed to superiors. Cicero was constantly their model, as Seneca was to the Spanish, and the result was the Italian bestowed most of his attention upon diction and cadence, and the Spaniard constantly strained to be emphatic and profound.

We spoke of the general influence of the formularies in Southern Europe during the Middle Ages. There is good reason to believe that England was directly influenced by them. First the intercourse of English monks with those of Italy was constant, and as many Englishmen were trained in Italy it would seem likely that they should either carry back to England manuscripts of such formularies or make known their knowledge on the subject by their practice.

One positive proof that such rules were known in England is provided by Rockinger. It is known that Giovanni di Bologna, a notary, formulated a large body of rules for Bishop John Peckam, of Canterbury. The fact that the formulator of these rules was a notary leads me to mention another possible connection between England and Italy on this subject. The *ars dictaminis* must be understood to include besides prose letters and letters in verse, forms of law, such as contracts, land grants and other legal documents, the making of which was, in these centuries, completely in the hands of churchmen. The whole institution of English written contracts was originally adopted from the learned Roman world. Professor Earle says, that between the eighth and thirteenth century these legal

contracts show a marked grammatical and rhetorical change.*

Historians of this period have remarked an extraordinary resemblance in style between the legal documents of England and those of Lombardy. It seems likely that the similarities are referable less to imitation on the part of the English, or intercourse between the two countries, than to common sources in the books of formal letter writing of the time. It was these Latin formularies, containing rules and illustrations, which in modernized form were known as complete letter writers or secretaries, and of which we shall again speak in their immediate relation to English literature.

In Spain the letter is not so important as a form of literature. The familiar letter seems not to have been suited to the Spanish genius, and such letters as remain are of a character, serious and profound. Whatever graceful familiarity had earlier entered into the letters of friends, is said largely to have disappeared with the coming of Charles V. The show even of private affection and feeling was rarely expressed or carefully guarded. This high seriousness of the Spanish character employed itself either in historical accounts or in formal dissertations, and only retained the external form of a letter. Such, for example, are the fervent exhortations of the religious writers, Juan d' Avila and Santa Teresa, and even the *Epistolas Familiares* of Guevara. The letters or *Golden Epistles* of Guevara, as they were afterwards called to express the value set upon them, were formal dissertations. None of them have the easy, natural air of a real correspondence, but they were enthusiastically admired, printed many times in Spain, and translated into the principal languages of Europe. In England they enjoyed unusual popularity.

*Introduction to Handbook of Land Charters, Part III., pp. XCIV, Oxford, 1888.

The best models containing the familiar quality of epistolary writing in the Spanish language are the letters of Antonio Perez, an exile from Spain, who spent some years in Paris and London. While in England he was intimate with both Bacon and Essex. His earliest publication was a small quarto, dedicated to the Earl of Essex, written and apparently printed in England about 1594, entitled *Pedazos de Historia*, and in 1598 he published his *Relaciones*, including *Memorial del Hecho de su Causa* and many of his letters. The last were addressed to persons in all stations of life, and the style varies from a grave and dignified arraignment of the author's former master, Philip II, to familiar and affectionate gossip with wife and children.

As illustrating the great interest in this subject, mention may here be made of one of the most remarkable forgeries of the seventeenth century, known as the *Cento Epistolario*, and purporting to be the work of the Bachiller Fernan Gomez de Cibdareal. This forgery consists of one hundred letters to great persons who lived in the fifteenth century and was considered one of the greatest monuments of early Spanish prose, until further inquiry proved it to be a late production, compiled from the chronicles for the purpose of magnifying a particular family. Such forgeries of letters appear to have been not uncommon. Rivadeneyra's *Biblioteca*, a collection of *Epistolario Espanol* in thirteen volumes, published in 1830, proves, by the inferior examples pressed into service, how little there is to be gathered. Cascales, the rhetorician, published three decades of letters in 1634. This outline shows how meagre Spanish literature in letters of the familiar type. There is said to be but a single known book upon the art of letter writing in Spanish. It was written upon the request of the Prince of Eboli by Juan de Yaciar and appeared in 1567. Ticknor doubts if it had as much influence upon letter writers as Guevara's Epistles.*

The correspondence of Henry VI., Marguerite of Angou-
*Spanish Literature, Vol. III, p. 162. Boston, 1866.

leine, of DuPlessis-Mornay and others is enough to show that the art of Cicero was not unknown to the writers of the French Renaissance, but it is to be remembered that these letters were not published until much later, and were written before the language had taken a definite form. Indeed, we shall find that the land of Madame de Sévigné really contributed very little to this form of literature until Montaigne demonstrated that the Essay was not his only instrument of self-portraiture. Then began the brilliant classic period of letters in French literature in the letters of Jean Balzac, Voiture, and many others. These writers were models of eloquence, studied and artistically correct. In varying degree their letters possessed the quality of familiarity. Voiture, of the two, was the less stilted, possibly because he did not desire to print his letters. Perfect naturalness was impossible, however, in his character of the professed *belle esprit* which made him the delight of the salon.

Balzac was more serious. He made a careful study of the mechanism of the clause, the sentence and the paragraph, and it seems not impossible that he confined himself somewhat closely to the rules of the formularies. Balzac's letters were probably written for publication, for they appeared as early as 1624, and a second edition, twelve years later, was often reprinted in France.

Boileau says Balzac confounded eloquence and rhetoric, and his work is to be judged by the rules of oratorical rather than epistolary composition, but this should not be made a matter of reproach. It shows that France had not yet freed herself from the dominion of those rules from which Italy had escaped but a century and a half earlier, and under which England was constrained until the beginning of the seventeenth century.

This outline of the History of the Letter in European Literature has presented several facts which we shall be called upon to remember in our study of the letter in England.

In Italy the complete letter writers were the descendants of the Latin Formularies. The familiar letter was there the product of the Humanist studies, and had Cicero as its immediate model. In Spain and France it was not so successful, probably because of its acceptance of Seneca's more rigid style. In all countries the letter form grew in popularity until in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was the most general form of literature in these countries, and exerted an international influence through its numerous translations.*

In an age in which learning is regarded with superstitious reverence, in which the art of writing is associated with evil and necromancy, the penning of a letter was a serious affair. Of the slender remains which must once have existed much has since perished. According to Ellis the earliest formal letter written in England and preserved to us, is that of Wieldham, Bishop of London, to Beretwald, Archbishop of Canterbury.† Beretwald was Archbishop of Canterbury from 692 to 731. This is the only example of epistolary correspondence previous to the Norman Conquest. After the Norman Conquest, letters became more frequent, written either in French or Latin; and many of the collections are by priests.

The Crusades, which brought England into contact with Europe, gave an impetus to letter writing and assisted the dissemination of formulary books. In the reign of Edward I., possibly in the latter part of his father's reign, paper was introduced by way of Italy from the East. The great effect, consequent upon the introduction of paper, is shown by the appearance, almost immediately, of numerous tracts, some of which in later times would have been called Complete Letter-writers. They were in both French and Latin. One of these for the French language is preserved in the Harleian

*See the Bibliography of translations and publications in foreign tongues, particularly English, at the end of this Thesis.

†Cottonian MSS.

Collection.* It is of the time of Edward III. The examples of the letters are in French, but the rubrics and directions are still in Latin. This interesting work is made up of the following : a letter from King Edward III. to Henry Duke of Lancaster with answer; secondly, a letter from Prince to Earl of Northampton with answer. The forms then go through all known gradations of society for that day. An earl to a baron, a baron to a knight, the knight to an esquire, the esquire to his companion, merchant to merchant, father to son, burgess to burgess, the lord to his bailiff, friend to friend—all with their corresponding answers. Then follow forms for the address of the clergy : an archbishop to a baron, a bishop to a knight and to an abbot, an abbot to an esquire, a prior to a merchant, a monk to his fellow monk, a father to his son's master. Lastly, forms for communication between women : a letter from Queen Philippa to a knight, a knight imprisoned to his lady, a mother to her son a student, from an abbess to a lady, from a sister to a sister—all with answers.

This and a similar volume† for the time of Richard II. are clearly an adaptation of the Latin formulary books.

The effect of the letter-writer was to fasten iron rules upon the correspondence of the Middle Ages. But when the sixteenth century dawned England felt the influence of the Renaissance as reflected in the familiar, easy style of the Continental letters.

The letters and papers of the reign of Henry VIII. number many thousands. A large mass of them are in letter form.‡ For example, the Cecil correspondence, preserved at Hatfield, extends from the accession of Edward VI. to the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It is said to contain upwards of

*No. 4971.

†Harleian Coll. Vol. 3988.

‡A. Jessopp, Nineteenth Century. Vol. 20.

30,000 documents, only a portion of which is contained in 210 huge volumes. Yet it is remarkable that in this prodigious collection a letter displaying the graceful ease of social intercourse is a rarity. The set sentences of the letter-writers are upon every page. Exceptions are the later correspondence of Sydney and of Fulke Greville, the quaint, strong-minded letters of Lord Bacon's mother and a few of Bacon's own letters.

The reign of Queen Elizabeth is almost exactly parallel with the rule of the Complete Letter-Writer. Reference has already been made to the formulary book of Erasmus and Vives. An interesting and influential book of this type was *The Enimie of Idlenessse*, a translation from the Italian, printed in 1568. It is the first treatise on the art of letter-writing noted in the Stationers' Register. The title of the book is as follows : " *The Enimie of Idlenessse*; teaching the manner and style how to indite, compose and write all sorts of Epistles and Letters; as well by answer or otherwise ; translated by William Fulwood."

This period was also productive of many treatises on Rhetoric. The most important are those of Leonardo Coxe ; two editions of Thomas Wilson's *Art of Rhetorique*, and possibly one by Fulwood himself, in 1555. None of these works directly influenced *The Enimie of Idlenessse* which was a close translation from Italian masters ; but they show that in England, as in Italy, the rules governing the written word were felt to be largely the same as those which govern the spoken word. *The Enimie of Idlenessse* consists of four parts in prose and verse. Part I. contains original matter and translations from Cicero and the ancients. Part II., translations from Poliziano, Ficino, Merula, Pico della Mirandola, and other Italian scholars. The letters of all these men had been often printed both in Italy and Paris. The letters of Poliziano were selected from a wide correspondence which he carried on with the distinguished

literary men of his time.* Part III. is made up of practical and personal letters, most of them original. Part IV. teaches the inditing of love letters by metrical examples and prose specimens.

This treatise enjoyed great popularity and went through seven editions between 1568† and 1621. *The Enimee of Idlenessse* was followed by several other letter-writers, but in 1586, the year in which the fourth edition of *The Enimee of Idlenessse* was published, there appeared an English Secretary by Angel Day. Within the period of fifty years Day's work went through eight editions to Fulwood's earlier seven. These were the most popular letter writers, but they had many imitators. The typical English Secretary—as this work was commonly called—was constructed much as follows:

Each chapter is opened by a number of rules and remarks upon the special variety of Epistle and followed by letters illustrating these points. These letters are carefully divided and their parts indicated by marginal notes. Angel Day himself quaintly expresses the purpose in the preface as follows : "I have first (in a preamble or intermixed discourse either preceding or interchangeably passing before or with the kind of every sort of Epistles) declared the properties and use of those Epistles * * * to the greater ornament whereof I have applied a number of figures, schemes, and tropes in the margent of every Epistle even with the places where they are used. And at the end of this worke, have set them all together, and therein explain to the learner's view and for his readier use, their particular natures and qualities, etc.

*Many of them had been published in *Illustrium virorum epistolae, ab A. Poliziano partim scriptae partim collectae* Paris, 1519 : 1523 : 1526 : Lyons, 1539 : Basle, 1542.

†1571, 1578, 1586, 1593, 1598.

Now for the readier finding of these Epistles, as each of their kinds are suted forth in sundry examples, peruse but the head of every page and there you shall find what in the same page is contained, as Epistles Hortatorie, Swasorie or Disswassorie." Chapter I. treats of Epistles, the commodities and use thereof. Chapter II. is devoted to points most to be considered in framing an Epistle. No. 1, Aptness of words and sentences. No. 2, Brevitie of speach. No. 3, Comlines in deliverance, concerning the person and cause.

Special attention is to be paid to the one addressed, to great and noble personages, especial duty appropriate to their calling ; "to our betters always with submission ; to our inferiors benignly and favorably ; to our friends lovingly, to our enemies sharplie and nippinglie."

Several pages are devoted to the study of the careful use of words and examples are given illustrating these points. The contents of Chapter III may be best represented in the following table :

Letters	{ General (or familiar), Special.
Expression of Letters	{ Invention, Disposition, Eloquution.
Style of Epistles	{ Sublime (oration), Humile (familiar letters), Mediocre (special letters)
Parts of Letters	{ Exordium, Narratio, Proposito. Confirmatio, Conjuratio, Peroratio.

Chapter IV. deals with the contents generally incident to all manner of Epistles, such as :

Manner of salutation,
Manner of subscription,
Manner of greeting.

The following table represents Day's classification of the varieties of letters :

	SPECIAL LETTERS.	GENERAL LETTERS.	
	Descriptive.		
Demonstrative.	Laudatorie.		
	Vituperatorie.		
Deliberative.	Hortatorie. Dehortatorie. Swasorie. Disswasorie. Conciliatorie. Reconciliatorie Petitorie. Commendatorie. Consolatorie. Monitorie. Reprehensorie. Amatorie.	Familiar.	Narratorie. Nunciatorie (express news to those far from us). Gratulatorie. Remunetratorie (a grateful relation of courtesies). Jocatorie (sweete kind of deliverance of some pretty conceit). Objurgatorie (remarks in which we rebuke kindred or servants). Mandatorie.
Judicial.	Accusatorie. Excusatorie. Expostulatorie Purgatorie. Defensorie. Exprobatorie. Deprecatorie. Invective.		

A comparison of the divisions of letters as set forth by Erasmus, and drawn by him from the Latin Formulary, with the divisions given by Angel Day, is interesting. It

shows how fixed the general form remains. Both recognize the divisions : Deliberative, Judicial, Demonstrative and Familiar. Erasmus added one more, Didascalicum. The following comparison will more plainly convey this :

LETTERS DELIBERATIVE.

ERASMUS.	DAY.
Commendatitiae.....	Commendarorie
Petitoriae	Petitorie
Consolatoriae	Consolatorie
Cohortatoriae	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> { Swasorie Swasorie </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> { Disswasoriæ..... Disswasorie </div>
Conciliatoriae.....	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> { Conciliarie Reconciliatorie </div>
Officiosae	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> { Hortorie Dehortorie </div>
Communicatoriae.....	Amatorie
Mandatoriae	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> { Monitorie Reprehensorie </div>

LETTERS DEMONSTRATIVE.

Gratulatoriae	
Laudatoriae.....	Laudatorie
	(in letters deliberative)
Reprehensoriae	
Gratiarum actiones	
Nuncupatoriae seu dedicatoriae	

JUDICIAL.

Accusatoriae seu expostulatoriae.....	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> { Accusatorie Purgatorie Exprobatorie Deprecatorie </div>
Querulae Inidignatoriae.....	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> { Invective Expostulatorie </div>
Comminatoriae.....	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> { Excusatorie Defensorie </div>

FAMILIAR.

Nunciatoriae.....	Nunciato
Jocosae	Jocatorie
Denunciatoriae	Narratorie
Ænigmaticae	Gratulatorie
	Renunctatorie
	Objurgatorie
	Mandatorie

The tables above, it is hoped, may be sufficient to show that what has often been regarded as a spontaneous product is really the result of an accepted system. None the less a certain freedom within these bounds was not unexpected nor unencouraged. Day himself says: "But insomuch, as to invention onlie naturallie to be expected no method can be well prescribed. I leave the epistles of this sort to the discretion of the writer, as his fantasia serveth to be pursued."*

While grammars and rhetorics were being produced for the clarifying of language and thought, books on letter-writing held a position quite as important; and as the heirs to the Latin formularies retained their sets of exact rules only enlarging them to meet the emergencies of greater mental activity. The outline of divisions of letters treated by Angel Day, compared with the scheme employed by Erasmus shows frequent parallels. The plan of illustration by example was probably first adopted by Fulwood from his model, and later, Day, simplified this by inserting letters more general in tone and in English.

Before leaving the subject of complete letter-writer, attention may be called to the unusual popularity in England of the Spanish letter writer, Guevara, of whom mention has already been made in another connection.

**Secretary*, p. 66. Part II.

The *Epistolas Familiares* of Guevara were printed in Spain, 1539, 1542, 1543, and published in England under the following titles: *Golden Epistles*, translated by Edward Hellows, 1575. *Fictitious Correspondence* between Emperor Trajan and Plutarch and the Roman Senate were separately translated in a collection of letters, London, Geoffrey Fenton, 1575. Further additions of the same work were as follows: *Familiar Epistles*, translated by E. A. Hellows for Ralph Newbury, 1577. *Familiar Epistles*, G. F(enton), 1577. *Familiar Epistles*, G. F(enton), 1582. *Familiar Epistles*, translated by E. A. Hellows (corrected and enlarged), 1584. There is also another copy of *Spanish Letters*, historical, satirical and moral, 1520-1525: Englished by John Savage, (London, n. d.), Ticknor says 1657.

Other writings of Guevara were very popular in England and often translated. These letters may be considered as the models of many collections which became popular under James I, such as Breton's *Packet of Mad Letters*, the correspondence between Harvey and Spenser, and those first notable examples of English letters collected for publication, the letters written by Joseph Hall.

When James came to the throne complete letter-writers, while still in favor,* were not so seriously followed, and everyone began to write as he chose. An ability to pen a graceful letters was now considered an accomplishment by which the writer might hope to gain friends or influence. A well penned letter might open a career and the professional letter-writer was not unknown. The News Letters of the seventeenth century performed in some part the work of the newspapers of to-day, and the Quidnuncs of the time bought and sold the last piece of intelligence, and immediately printed it and circulated it sometimes widely, sometimes among the privileged few.

* See Bibliography.

This produced its effect upon familiar correspondence. The letter-writers were writing for an outside public and they could not tell how large the public might become. Hence arose that distinction between familiar letters exchanged between friends and that class of letters which though purporting to be the same were actually written with a conscious literary intent. The first may be exemplified by the letters of John Donne or Sir Henry Wotton and their friends, the latter by the publication of James Howell's *Epistolaæ Horæ Elianaæ*, and his imitators. The former type are not referable immediately to any one model; but the latter may be considered as a response to a general interest of the period in epistolary correspondence which manifested itself among other things in numerous translations of the French writer Balzac. Howell himself, who was a linguist, read the letters of Balzac in the original.*

During the Commonwealth period there were many varieties of the letter, such as the letters of Cromwell and the Hutchinsons, both of which were largely political in their character and such as the letters of courtship exchanged between Dorothea Osborne and Sir W. Temple. None of these exhibit the qualities of the two types alluded to above. In the Horatian spirit of the letters of Cowley we discover some of the best elements of the familiar letter. There is

*The Letters of Monsieur de Balzac, translated by William Tirwhyt. London, 1634. (Same year second edition appeared at Paris.)

New Epistles of Monsieur de Balzac, translated by Sir Richard Baker (being the second and third volume. London, 1638).

A new collection of Epistles, being the fourth and last volume newly translated. Oxford 1639.

Choyce Letters to several grand and eminent persons in France, whereunto are annexed familiar letters to his friend Mons. Chapelain, London, 1658. There are also other copies in British Museum and Bodleian but usually they contain only a couple of letters and I have not noted them.

more than the mere style of Cowley to justify us in regarding him as the forerunner of the familiar letter of Queen Anne. Under Queen Anne the familiar letter became a fine art in the hands of Pope, Bollingbroke, Lady Wortley Montague, Horace Walpole and his friend the poet Gray.

From this study four things may be noted as influential in the history of English Letters ; first, the numerous publication of Fulwood's *Enimiee of Idlenessse*, Guevara's *Golden Epistles* and Balzac's *Letters* show not only that Englishmen were interested in this form of literature but that they took the product of three foreign countries. Secondly, the miscellaneous notices in the Stationers' Register relating to letters may be grouped under two divisions, treatises relating to the art of letter writing and letters themselves. These latter may be divided into letters didactic and letters familiar, both of which received a decided impulse, if they were not largely the product of the translations above mentioned. Thirdly, the English treatises on the art of letter writing may be ascribed, for the most part, directly to the influence of Fulwood. Fourthly, the popularity of Letters Didactic and Letters Familiar, appears invariably to have followed, never to have preceded, the publication of Continental favorites.

In the Stationers' Register, as in the books of the day which were made up of selections, great confusion is exhibited in the use of the term, letter. We find it applied indiscriminately to sermons in the form of letters, to tracts, pamphlets, essays, or metrical compositions.

The following classification may serve the present purposes : I. State Letters, nearly all of those mentioned in the reign of Henry VIII, were of this kind. II. Actual private correspondence, such as Sidney's and noticeably that of Sir Henry Wotton. III. Letters of conscious literary intent, Breton's *Packet of Mad Letters*, and the correspondence between Gabriel Harvey and Spenser, and the letters of Joseph Hall and James Howell. This division corresponds

to Day's division into letters judicial, familiar and deliberative.

The letters of Sir Henry Wotton, published after his death in the *Reliquiae Wottonianæ* and the *Epistolæ Hoc-Elianae* may be regarded as peculiarly favorable specimens of the two contrasted types of the letters of actual private correspondence on the one hand and the familiar letter on the other. As the quality of both Wotton's and Howell's letters is so largely a product of training and travel, a brief review of their lives at this point seems not undesirable.*

Sir Henry Wotton was born in 1568 and died in 1639. He matriculated at New College, Oxford, June 5, 1584, ten years before Howell was born. Two years later Wotton migrated to Queen's College, where he began his literary efforts in a play called *Tuncredo*. Unfortunately this has been lost. He made one notable effort in a scientific subject. It consisted of three lectures in Latin on the form, the motion and structure of the eye. The warm friendship which he formed at Oxford with Donne is of interest as a connecting link between these two writers of delightful letters. After June 5, 1588, Wotton left England for a long tour of the Continent. He occupied nearly seven years in his journey. He first proceeded to the University of Altdorf, where he met Edward, Lord Zouche, a regular correspondent of his later years. At Linz, he witnessed some experiments carried out by Kepler. He then went on to Vienna, Rome, Naples, Venice, Florence and finally back to Geneva, June 22, 1603, where he lodged with the scholar Casaubon. He subsequently spent much time in France. During his stay Continental life inspired Wotton, as it later did Howell and many other educated Englishmen, with the desire to

* These accounts are based largely upon the articles in the Dictionary of National Biography.

enter the diplomatic service. He probably hoped to put himself in the line of such advancement by supplying the Earl of Essex with foreign news. This was appreciated by the Earl of Essex and he was appointed his secretary in 1598 and entrusted with several important foreign affairs, and the collection of foreign intelligence from various parts of Europe. When Essex's futile plot was discovered, Wotton hastily left England for a second visit to Italy and remained there an exile during the remainder of Elizabeth's reign. He then employed his time upon *The State of Christendom*, an outspoken survey of current politics. This remained unpublished until 1567, eighteen years after the author's death. When Wotton was in Florence he obtained an introduction to the Court of Ferdinand : this proved to be a most fortunate connection for him, because the Duke's ministers intercepted letters disclosing a design upon the life of King James of Scotland and Wotton was intrusted with letters warning the King. He journeyed to Scotland by way of Sweden, and after three months journey returned to Florence, where he remained until the death of Queen Elizabeth. Under James I., Wotton again came into favor for a short time. Because of his personal service he was kindly received by the new sovereign, was knighted and given the choice of a post as ambassador at either the courts of Spain, France or Venice. He accepted that of Venice, and left London 1604. His friend Donne helped to speed him on the way by a letter. Wotton was engaged in diplomatic duties at Venice for nearly twenty years, but did not hold the office continuously. There were three terms of service—1604–1612, 1616–1619, 1621–1624. On his way through Augsburg to Italy he perpetrated the celebrated pun which is said to have led to his loss of position in 1612. Wotton, on the death of Lord Salisbury, 1612, became a candidate for the vacant post of secretary to the King. The Queen and Prince Henry encouraged these ambitions, but Wotton had many enemies at court. His

veracity was questioned. Chamberlain, who usually called him in his correspondence "Signor Fabritio," declared in October, 1612, "My good old friend, Fabritio, will never leave his good old trade of being Fabler or, as the Devil is, father of lies." Hard upon such influences and sentiments followed the King's discovery of the pun. He was invited to explain, but he lost all preferments. Through the next year Wotton sought official employments in vain, and in 1614 he entered the House of Commons as M. P. for Appleby. He remained loyal to the King and stoutly supported the King's claim to lay impositions on merchandise without appeal to Parliament. The right he argued to hereditary although not to elective monarchs. This faithfulness was rewarded by various diplomatic commissions on the Continent. In 1616 Wotton was again sent to Venice where he employed much of his time in purchasing pictures and works of art for the King and Buckingham. He returned in 1619 by way of Germany to England. At Heilbron he visited the Elector Palatine, recently elected King of Bohemia. Distressed by the misfortunes threatening the Electress Palatine and her husband, Wotton deemed it the duty of James I. to intervene. He probably laid the matter before James in his interview in August at Woodstock, but it seems to have been coldly received. In June of the following year he was sent to sound the Emperor at Vienna as to the possibility of staying the war. He was unable to reach any basis of agreement and therefore proceeded to Venice, where he remained until his final return to England in the early months of 1624. When he reached England he was absolutely penniless. He again sought employment, and James suggested he might in course of time become Master of the Rolls. However a more suitable office was opened to him, he was elected Provost of Eton and duly instituted in that office on the 24th of July, 1624. His circumstances were so straitened that he was arrested for debt,

thereupon the king granted him a pension of £200, and after persistent importunities raised this pension to £500 in order to enable him to write a history of England.

Wotton was an amiable *dilettante*, or amateur in literature, with a growing inclination to idleness in his later years.* His History of England did not progress beyond the accumulation of a few notes on William I and Henry VI.† He contemplated a life of Martin Luther, but never began it, and promised shortly after Donne's death, in 1631, to write a life of the Dean.‡ This was to have been an introduction to the *Eighty Sermons* by Donne. Izaak Walton, by request, prepared the notes, but Wotton never worked up the material, and Walton's biography of Donne is all that survives of the undertaking.

Wotton's attention at Eton seems to have been divided between personal interest in the students and angling. After his death many papers were found, and the chief of them were collected in the *Reliquiae Wottonianæ*, first published in 1651, and appearing in three later editions up to 1685. This collection was prefaced by an elegy by Abraham Cowley, and a memoir from the pen of Izaak Walton, who apparently had a chief hand in preparing the work for the press. For the present purpose, the letters are most valuable. Wotton maintained to the end of his life an interesting correspondence. There are two letters of particular interest. One was to Lord Bacon, thanking him for his gift of three copies of his *Novum Organum* and promising to send one of them to Kepler. Another was to Milton appreciative of his *Comus*. In 1661 some further letters were issued as letters of Sir Henry Wotton to Sir Edmund Bacon. These letters cover

*Dictionary of National Biography, S. V.

†*Reliquiae*, page 100–110.

‡Gosse's Life of Donne, Vol. II, pp. 315.
Walton's Introduction.

the period of 1611–1638. A third and enlarged edition of the *Reliquiae** contains a few new historical essays on Italian topics ; the letters to Sir Edmund Bacon, and other letters to and from several persons, mainly on foreign politics. In 1685, a fourth edition appeared, with an important appendix of Wotton's letters to Edward, Lord Zouche.

Letters and despatches from Sir Henry Wotton to James I. and his ministers, in the years 1617–1620, were printed from the originals in the library of Eton College, for the Roxburghe Club, in 1850. These letters, dated from Venice, are usually in Italian, and bear Wotton's pseudonym of Gregorio de'Monti†

James Howell was born of Welsh parents about the year 1594. His education was obtained at the Hereford free school and at Oxford.‡ Soon after taking his degree he became steward of a glassware manufactory in London. In 1616, it became desirable to obtain materials and skilled workmen from the Continent, and Howell was selected by his employers for this task. In his travels through Holland, Spain, France and Italy, Howell became an accomplished linguist. Upon his return to London he gave up his connections with the glass house and vainly sought to join the embassy of Sir John Ayres, in which position he endeavored to employ his linguistic ability. Failing in this attempt, he acted as tutor and, at length, in 1622, was sent to Spain on a special diplomatic mission. This second visit to southern Europe completed Howell's training and gives him much of his literary interest. In the first visit he had become an accomplished linguist and during his stay in Venice he had received many attentions from Sir Henry Wotton. Howell's second visit led to the production of his *Lexicon Tetraglotton*, or an *English-*

*Other works are noted page 56, 57, Vol. III. Dictionary of N. B.

†1672.

‡Epistle, Vol. I. Sec. 1, 2.

French-Italian-Spanish Dictionary, London, 1659-60, with “*A Particular Vocabulary*” in the four languages of technical terms, and an appendix (published separately in 1659) of “Proverbs of the Saxon Tongue, Italian, French and Spanish, whereunto the British (namely Welsh) for their great antiquity and weight are added.” Howell revised and expanded Cotgrave’s French and English Dictionary, 1650, and wrote a new English Grammar * * * for Foreigners to learn English * * * with another grammar of the Spanish or Castilian tongue, with some special remarks on the Portuguese Dialect and notes on travel in Spain and Portugal for the service of her Majesty” (in both English and Spanish, printed on opposite pages), 1662. After Howell died his French Grammar, a dialogue consisting of all Gallicisms, appeared, 1673.

After two years spent in his mission to Spain, Howell returned to London, and in 1626, was appointed secretary to Lord Scrope, afterwards Earl of Sunderland. This position required his residence at York, and in March of the next year he was elected Member of Parliament for Richmond, Yorkshire.

For the next three years Howell seems to have lived a life of comfort. Upon the death of Lord Scrope, 1630, Howell was again without a fixed position. Two years later we discover him as secretary of an embassy sent to the court of Denmark, where he delivered the official Latin speech, and according to his own account was quite successful. For the next three years we have no definite information of his employment, but in 1635 we discover him forwarding many letters to Strafford from Westminster and engaged in private business of Secretary Windebank’s in France. There seems reason to believe that from 1630 to 1639, in which latter year Howell crossed to Lord Strafford in Dublin to accept the appointment of clerk of the council, he was a private newsgatherer. In 1643 Howell was imprisoned in

the Fleet and hope and preferment failing, his aspirations were compelled to assume a new form. The enforced leisure caused him to give his entire attention to literary pursuits, for solace as well as for pecuniary benefit. The charge brought against Howell by a committee of Parliament was that against an insolvent debtor,* but according to Howell † himself, his only offense was loyalty. Parliament evidently suspected treachery, as Howell's papers were seized. Howell's connection with Strafford would have justified this, without reference to several of his earlier literary efforts. During the period of his newsgathering in London he had become acquainted with the chief literary men of the day. Ben Jonson was his friend, and Lord Herbert of Cherbury and Sir Kenelm Digby were among his correspondents. In 1640 Howell began an independent literary career with the publication of an allegory in prose dealing with events between 1603-40 entitled, *Dodona's Grove, or the Vocal Forest*. It was probably this effort which led to his imprisonment. For Prynne in his *Popish Royal Favourite* (1644), a year after the Parliament had imprisoned Howell, referred to Howell's account of Prince Charles' visit to Spain in *Dodona's Grove* and described him as "No friend to Parliament and a malignant." Howell repudiated the charge in his *vindication* of some passages reflected upon him published in the same year, to which he added, *A Clearing of Some Occurrences in Spain at His Majesty's Being there*. A little later Howell returned to the topic in *Pre-eminence and Pedigree of Parliament*, in which he described the long Parliament as "that high synedrion wherein the wisdom of the whole Senate is epitomized." Prynne adhered to his original statement in "*A moderate Apology against a pretended Calumny.*" London 1644. *England's Tears for the Present Wars* was the response.

*See Anthony a Wood in *Athenae Oxoniensis* ed., 1817.

†Vol. I., Part VI., letters 55 and 60.

This shows how the struggle in Parliament was fought again by the pamphleteers. The fact that *Dodona's Grove* with added political tracts passed into second and third editions, 1644-45, was published in French translation in the same year of its appearance in England and appeared in Latin version in 1646-50, certainly attests contemporary interest.

It is possible that the notoriety of these writings lengthened Howell's stay in prison until 1651. While engaged in this controversy Howell was obliged to placate King Charles. The second of his literary efforts had been a printed poem dated January 1, 1641-2 entitled the *Vote* or a poem presented to his Majesty for a New Year's gift. *Instruction for Forrein Travel*, contained a dedication in verse to Prince Charles afterwards Charles II. But during the later pamphlet war Howell received intimation that Charles, now King, considered his recent utterances as indifferent and lukewarm. Thereupon he wrote the King a letter assuring him of his loyalty. In 1649 Howell issued Charles I.'s latest declaration "Touching his Constancy in the Protestant Religion" in English, French and Latin. By 1651 he changed his position, and dedicated to the Long Parliament his "*S. P. Q. V., a Survey of the Seignorie of Venice.*" Thereupon he was admitted to bail and released the same year.

As soon as Cromwell was restored in supreme power Howell sought his favor by dedicating to him a pamphlet entitled *Some Sober Inspections made into the carriage and consults of the late Long Parliament.** In this pamphlet he commends Cromwell for having destroyed the Parliament. Dugdale, writing October 9, 1655, declares that Howell in this tract spoke more boldly "than any man hath wrote since they sate."† A year after the publication of the above tract Howell addressed an "*Admonition to my Lord Protector and his Council in present*

*London, 1660; reissued, 1663.

†Historical MSS. Comm. 5th Rep., pp. 17.

danger," in which, while urging the need of an hereditary monarchy, he advised Cromwell to conciliate the army by admitting the officers to political influence, and to negotiate with Charles Stuart the treaty by which Charles should succeed him under well defined limitations. Three years later he offered to write for the council of state a new treatise on *Sovereignty of the Seas.**

These pamphlets show Howell's political connection with the Commonwealth. Other publications that attained popularity at this period were: *An Historical Discourse; or, Perlustration of the City of London and Westminster*, London, 1657. A gossipy book largely borrowed from Stow. On the 23d of March, 1659 or 60, Howell wrote to Sir Edward Walker of the necessity of calling in King Charles. In 1660 appeared a broadside to him entitled *England's Joys Expressed* addressed to General Monck.

Immediately upon the restoration of Charles, Howell began his importunities. He seems always to have pressed his personal claims with great indefatigability. At this period he asked for the appointment either of the clerk of the council or as an assistant and secretary to a royal commission for the regulation and advancement of trade. He also pointed out that his linguistic acquirements qualified him to become "tutor for languages" to Queen Catherine of Braganza. None of these positions did he receive, but in 1661 the King made him a free gift of £200. He was, however appointed Historiographer Royal of England with a salary of £100. For the remaining five years of his life he devoted himself to publishing political tracts usually dedicated to the King, and to reissuing several volumes of poems. One of these tracts, *Cordial for the Cavaliers*, involved him in a bitter controversy with Roger L'Estrange. Howell's poems were very popular, and it was de-

*See History MSS. Comm. 5th Rep., pp. 314.

clared not to know Howell "were an ignorance beyond barbarism."*

Howell died unmarried in the parish of S. Andrews Holborn, and was buried on the 3d of November, 1666. In this brief outline of Howell's literary activity no attempt has been made to enumerate all the publications which Howell gave out to the world. They embrace besides the works mentioned above, his admirable letters and some writings of imaginative character.†

As soon as one approaches the letters of Howell one becomes involved in the question, what reliance is to be placed to the dates assigned to them? As collected in the second edition all are dated and purport in many instances to have been the actual letters sent to persons, usually of political prominence. Modern historians have attempted to employ them but find them very inaccurate. Professor Gardiner ‡ discovered frequent inaccuracies in the earlier letters.

This discovery has strengthened Anthony a Wood's position that Howell was writing in the Fleet to relieve his necessities. It is probable that many of these letters were purely fictitious. Points favoring this view are as follows : I. Practically none of the original MSS. letters are found in the archives of the families to whose members these letters were addressed. The single exception was in the case of a few letters assigned to Howell and dated from Madrid in 1623, which belonged to the Earl of Westmoreland in 1885. They have since been sold and cannot be traced. II. In certain letters dated 1635 and 1637, Howell clearly borrows from Browne's *Religio Medici*, which according to Browne's own statement was not in MSS. until 1636 and was not printed until 1842. III. A minor point is that the letters are all from Howell to other persons, and it is obvious that if genuine,

**Censura Literaria*, Vol. III., pp. 277.

†See Dict. of Nat. Biog., pp. 113 and pp. 114.

‡See History of England, 1603-1642. Preface Vol. I, pp. XIV.

they were printed from copies of the originals preserved by Howell. But Howell himself has told us that all his papers were seized by officers of the Long Parliament before he entered the Fleet. He makes no mention of restitution. Besides this external evidence argument may be adduced from the style of Howell's letters to show that they were not actually written at the dates which he assigned to them.

I. The fact that those letters, undoubtedly news letters, which Howell sent to Strafford and Windebank, are far simpler productions than the "familiar epistles" in which Howell failed to include them.* II. The style is uniformly the same from the earliest to the latest letter. It is remarkable that a writer should have varied so little in the length of time between 1617 to the last actual date, 1654. III. In the opening letter of the second and later editions—it is not in the first—Howell, while professing to return to Sir J.S., of Leeds Castle, a copy of Balzac, discusses the subject of epistolary correspondence, and almost avows in it that he is prefacing a professedly literary collection. Still another point is to be found in the inclusion amongst the letters of several literary treatises without any pretense to epistolary form, which are particularly the ones on Languages,† on Religion,‡ and the purely literary essay on Wines.||

What, then, is to be considered as the position of these letters in the formation of English literature? At one time I was inclined to think they were *bona fide* news letters contributed to earlier collections. I was not able to find any evidence to substantiate this position. Evidence derivable from Angel Day's *English Secretary* leads to an entirely different decision. The points cited above seem to suggest a

**Strafford Letters Cal. State Papers, 1633-5.*

†Book II., Letters LV., LX.

‡*Ibid. VIII-XL.*

||*Ibid. II., LIV., etc.*

sufficient reason to doubt that these letters are what they represent themselves to be. With no MSS. to be found, we are justified in believing the letters are not copies of the actual letters written to friends, and from the uniformity of style it seems not impossible that they were all written about the same time, perhaps, as a literary exercise. If such was the case we should look for predecessors or imitators. The history of English prose confirms us. Prose productions of this general type were enormously popular before Howell's. Several previous examples have already been cited above. After Howell came many imitators, among them Thomas Forde's *Virtus Rediviva* and Loveday's *Letters Domestick and Forrein*. By far the larger number of these collections were written as purely literary exercises. Howell himself may be quoted to prove this position. In a letter dated March 28, 1618, he speaks of Sir Walter Raleigh's return from Guiana as being the talk of the town.*. Now, as Sir Walter Raleigh only landed in England the first week of June, 1618,† and therefore three months after the alleged date of this letter, it is plain the date assigned cannot be the actual one. Again in a letter "to the honorable Master Car. Ra.," dated Fleet, May 5, 1645,‡ Howell writes as follows, in answer to the gentleman's accusation of injustice against the king, to Sir W. R.: "I was a youth about Town when he undertook that Expedition, and I remember most men expected that mine then to be an imaginary politic thing; but at his return, and missing of the enterprise, the suspicions turned in most to real belief's that 'twas no other. And King James, in that capital declaration which he commanded to be printed and published afterwards touching the circumstances of this action (upon which my Letter is grounded and which I have still by

*Fam. Let., page 6 Vol. I.

†Gardiner, Vol. III., p. 131.

‡Fam. Let., p. 89, Vol. II.

me) terms it no less, etc. Therefore it was far from being my opinion broach'd by myself, or bottom'd upon weak grounds; for I was careful of nothing more, than those Letters being to breathe open Air, should relate nothing but what should be derived from good fountains."

It seems to me this last statement is certainly very plain. It can only be understood as evidence that Howell was writing for publication. It is to be remembered that no dates appeared in the first edition so that even if the earlier letter was written upon the arrival of Sir Walter Raleigh it could not have been founded at that time, as he later avers it was, upon King James' declaration. The declaration was not published until after action against Raleigh had been taken. Further mistakes in dates are many, for example, one letter* is dated June 3, 1619. The reference to the elected Emperor shows that this letter is ante-dated.

Another letter† represents Howell at Paris, September 8, 1620, and on his way to Spain. This is at a date when we know he was on his way back to England. He arrived in England either late that year or the first of 1621.‡ This reference to his intended trip to Spain, taken in connection with his mention of a certain late murder, which by the way occurred three years before, show the dates are mixed. If we should substitute September 8, 1617, for 1620 there would be no discrepancies. But what is the cause of this mistake in dates?

In another instance§ the time mentioned is not sufficient to allow a letter to travel from Londen to Venice. In a letter dated March 5, 1618,|| he says he is safe returned from his

*Book I., Letter X.

†Book I., Letter XIX.

‡See letter to his father, 1621. Book I. Sec. 2. Letter 1.

§Book I., Letter XXXIV.

||Book II., Section 2, p. 103.

foreign travel. He was as a fact then traveling abroad and did not return until 1620 or 1621.

He expresses thanks for his fellowship in a letter* dated 1621, when he did not receive the fellowship until 1623.

In a letter,† dated March 20, 1618, Howell refers to accepting the invitation of Lord Savage to travel with his sons. He was not in England, but in Spain at that date. He did travel in the summer of 1621 with the sons of Lord Savage, but the title, Lord Savage, was only acquired after 1626. At the presumptive date Lord Savage was only Sir Thomas.

Professor Gardiner, in preface to Vol. IV of the *History of England*,‡ points out many other discrepancies in a certain letter||, which, while it professes to give the news of the day, varies between the years 1619 and 1623.

Letter 23, dated July 1, 1629, refers to Wentworth as Lord Deputy of Ireland. Wentworth was made Lord Deputy of Ireland in 1632. It is not necessary to go further in this examination. I consider this is sufficient proof that Howell's letters are not to be accepted as they are found dated: The facts are substantially correct. Our conclusion must be either that, if copies, the dates were not upon the original, or that they were written from memory. If copies, why in the case of Sir Walter Raleigh does he mention the fact that they were to breathe open air? Or in a letter, professing to give the news of the day does he involve the news of four years? I think we must look for some other theory, and I present the theory that they were an imitation of the letter-writers. Howell never quotes an authority, although his authorities are easily identified. In the very

*Book I. Sec. 2. Letter VI.

†Book I. Sec. 2.

‡1603-1642.

||Book I. Sec. 2. Letter XII.

first letter of his work, he has presented us with a solution for the existence of this work.

There he defines what a letter should be, takes exceptions to Balzac, the French writer, and to the Latin writers ; and he divides letters according to the division of Angel Day in *The English Secretary*. He appears to be professedly prefacing an exposition of his own theories. The following is the result of a comparison of Angel Day's divisions of Familiar Letters with those of James Howell :

DAY.	HOWELL.
Narratorie Nunciatorie } Objugatorie (qualities).	Remunerative. Narratory (relations). Monitorie. Reprehensions.
Jocatorie.	Objugatory (reprehensions). Monitory (counsel). Consolatory (comfort).
Gratulatorie.	Congratulatory (joy).

Examples of each of these divisions selected from both Day and Howell are the best proofs of the fixed rules of these forms. Contrast the following "narratory" passages, the first from Day, the second from Howell :

"Good father, having the opportunitie of this bearer, I thought good to certifie you of my present being, giving you to understand that I am, I thank God and you, in good health, and verie well placed heere in London, where I am in hope to continue, my heere being to some profitable purpose. My master useth me in good sort, and I lacke nothing that appertaineth unto such a one as myselfe. I trust you shall have joy of mee, and ere a few years passed I doubt not but so as to behave myselfe, that I shall well deserve this good liking that alreadie I have of my maister, etc."*

"To MY FATHER :

"I should be much wanting to myself and that other obli-

**English Secretary*, Part II, p. 59. London, 1607.

gation of duty, the Law of God and His handmaid Nature hath imposed upon me, if I should not acquaint you with the course and quality of my affairs and fortunes, specially at this time that I am upon point of crossing the Seas to eat my bread abroad. Nor is the common relation of a Son that only induc'd me hereunto, but that most indulgent and costly care you have been so pleased (in so extraordinary a manner) to have had of my breeding (though one child of fifteen) by placing me in a choice methodical School (so far distant from your dwelling) under a learned (though lashing Master); and by transplanting me thence to Oxford, to be graduated; and so holding me still up by the chin until I could swim without Bladders. This Patrimony and liberal Education you have been Pleased to endow me withal, I now carry along with me abroad, as a sure inseparable Treasure; nor do I feel it any burden or encumbrance unto me at all: and what danger soever my person, or other things I have about me, do incur yet I do not fear the losing of this, either by ship-wreck or Pyrats at Sea, nor by Robbers, or Fire, nor any other Casualty ashore; and at my return to England, I hope, at leastwise I shall do my endeavor that you may find this Patrimony improved somewhat to your comfort, etc." *

Once more contrast "a letter remunerative" of each :

"Good M. D., my breach of promise in not having visited you with deserved requital, sithence my departure, maie breedse suspition and doubt of ingratefulnessse, but I hope, and by hope presume, that of your own good disposition towards all your acquaintance, you will yeelde unto an approved trial before you condemn." †

" My DEAR DAN :

"I have made your friendship so necessary unto me for the contentment of my life, that happiness itself would be a

**English Secretary*, Part II, p. 64.

†*Epistolae*, Vol. II, p. 2.

kind of infelicity without it ; it is needful to me as fire and water, as the very air I take in and breathe out. It is to me not only necessitudo, but necessitas. Therefore, I pray, let me enjoy it in that fair proportion that I desire to return unto you by way of correspondence and retaliation. Our first league of love, you know, was contracted among the Muses in Oxford, for no sooner was I matriculated to her but I was adopted to you ; I became her son and your friend at one time. You know I followed you then to London, where our love received confirmation, in the Temple and elsewhere.

* * * Letters have a strong operation ; they have a kind of art like embraces to mingle souls, and make them meet, though million of paces assunder, by them we may converse, and know how it fares with each other, as it were by enter-cours of spirits."*

In the "objugatorie" letter we note the same contrast :

"Among some other causes that lately have bin adver-tised unto me from my good and loving friends. It is known unto that you in my absence, as wel towards your Mistresse whom in my place I have appointed over you as among other your fellow servants do take much upon you, etc."†

"COUSIN :

"A letter of yours was lately delivered, I made a shift to read the superscription but within, I wondered what language it might be in which 'twas written, at first I thought 'twas Hebrew, or some of her dialects, and so went from the liver to the heart, from right hand to left to read it, but could make nothing of it ; then I thought it might be the Chinese, and went to read the words perpendicular ; and the lines were so crooked and distorted, that no coherence could be made ; Greek I perceiv'd 'twas not nor Latin nor English ; so I gave it for mere gibbrish, and your characters to be rather Hiero-

**English Secretary*, Part II., p. 69. London, 1655.

†*Epistolae*, Vol. II, Letter IV, 3rd edition.

glyphics than letters. The best is, you keep your lines at a good distance, like those in Chancery Bills, who as a clerk said were made so wide a purpose, because the clients should have room enough to walk between them without jostling one another; yet this wideness had bin excusable if your lines had bin straight, but they were full of odd kinds of undulations and windings. If you can write no otherwise, one may read your thoughts as soon as your characters. It is some excuse for you that you are a young beginner, I pray then let it appear in your next what a proficient you are, otherwise some blame may light on me that placed you there, etc."*

The next two examples are mandatory:

"My heartie commendations remembered unto you, good master R. These are to certifie you that I have presumed so much on your friendship, as to put over certaine causes of mine in your name, for so much as for many respects I find myself far insufficient to deal with the parties. I must therefore desire you to receive some instruction, etc."†

"To MY LORD DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

"May it please your grace to peruse and pardon these few advertisements which I would not dare to present, had I not hopes that the goodness which is concomitant with your greatness, would make them veniall * * * My Lord under favor, it were not amiss if your grace would be pleased to part with some of those places you hold, which have least relation to the Court, it would take away the mutterings that run of multiplicity of offices, and in my shallow apprehension, your grace would stand more firm without an anchor * * * lastly, it were not amiss, that your Grace would settle a standing Mansion house and Family, that Suitors may know whither to repair constantly and that your servants every one

**English Secretary*, Part II., p. 73.

†*Epistolae*. Vol. I., Sec. V., Letter 30.

in his place, might know what belongs to his place, and attend accordingly."*

"Good cosen, I am glad to heare of your good preferrment in London, and that, as I heare by your father and mother you are so well placed there and with so good a master."†

The formality of Howell's following of Day is to be seen in this short "gratulatorie" passage :

"SIR :

"Give me leave to congratulate your happy return from the Levant, and the great honor you have acquired for your gallant comportment in Algier in escating so many English slaves ; by bearing up so bravely against the Venetian fleet in the Bay of Scanderron, and making the Pantaloni to know themselves and you better. * * * "‡

Lastly, take this passage of "Comfort :"

"SIR:—The sad tidings of my dear friend Dr. Prichard's death sunk deep into me, and the more I ruminate upon it, the more I resent it. But when I contemplate the order and those adamantine laws which nature put in such strict execution throughout this elementary world ; when I consider that up and down this frail globe of earth we are but strangers or sojourners at best, being designed for an infinitely better country ; when I think that our egress out of this life, is as our ingress (all which he knew as much as any), these thoughts in a checking way turn my melancholy to a counter fashion they beget another spirit within me, etc. * * * "||

**English Secretary*, Part II., p. 68.

†*Epistolae*. Vol. I., Sec. IV., Letter 18.

‡*Epistolae*. Section V., Letter 32.

||*Epistolae*. Letters 45, Vol. II., Sec. 2.

These letters of Howell do not reveal any systematic attempt to write a number of successive letters of any one type. Letters classed under "Narratory" and "Monitory" predominate. After the first volume examples of monitory letters are generally found as introductory to very long letters of the first class. I believe when we consider the introductory letter to the second edition it becomes quite certain that Howell was thoroughly acquainted with the stereotyped forms of the letter-writers and set himself to produce a literary work upon these lines. His education was largely gained from travel and reading, therefore the larger number are narratory. Upon the theory, that these letters are literary fabrications utilizing the political facts of the age, but written in prison when the author could not verify all the dates mentioned, is founded our explanation for the numerous mistakes in dates. This explanation does not rob the letters of their literary value; rather intensifies it. Nor does it detract from their historical value; that has been conclusively shown to be very little. It will explain the apparent audacity of writing so freely upon delicate questions of the day as for instance the Spanish Marriage.*

Sir Henry Wotton's letters are of an entirely different type. They are the actual expressions of one friend to another. There is no intention of publication. These letters run on gracefully and without any attempt to appear learned or imposing. Neither does Wotton employ any rhetorical device to hold the attention, such as very concise, sweeping statements, short sentences, or exclamatory expressions. His style has the long, sweeping periods, and his statements have the balance one usually associates with the utterances of an ambassador. The character of Wotton, the man of easy, even, languid life, but always giving promise of strength, is

*See Professor Saintsbury in English Prose, Henry Craik, 1894, Vol. II., p. 236.

reproduced in every line he writes. The following I quote as example of his style :

MY DEAR LORD :*

While I had your Lordship (as I am always bound) in my meditation and somewhat under my pen (wherewith I hope in due time to express how much I Honor your Noble Virtues), I am (as if I had not been overladen before) surprised with a new favor (for that is the true Title of your commands) touching a fine Boy of this College, whom I perceive your Letter of the Thirtieth of the last Month to pertain to your Care, *Quid multa?* It shall be done : Only in one thing I must crave Pardon, to pass a little gentle expostulation with your Lordship. You are pleased in your Letter to accept my inconveniences, as if in the Nobleness of your Nature (notwithstanding your desire) you would allow me here a liberty of my own Judgment, or Affections. No, my good Lord, That Privilege comes too late, even for yourself to give me, when I once understood your mind. For let me assure Your Lordship, that I have such a conscience and real feeling of my deep obligations towards your noble person, as no value nor respect could under heaven purchase my voice from him on whom you have bestowed it. It is true that the King himself, and no longer than three or four days before the date of your letter (so nimble are the times) did write for another ; but we shall satisfie his Majesty with a pre-election, and yours shall have my first Nomination which, however, will fall timely enough for him within the year, For there belongs (after they are chosen) a little soaking, as well as baking before, unto our Boys, and so not to insist any longer, upon such a poor obedience I humbly lay myself, and whatsoever is, or shall be within my power at your Lordship's feet, remaining,

Your Lordships in the truest,
and heartiest devotions,

**Reliquiae, 1685.*

Another charming letter is that written to Milton,* and the following :

To THE KING.†

My most dear and dread Sovereign,

As I give Your Majesty foreknowledge of my intention to enter into the church, and had Your Gracious Approvement therein, so I hold it a second duty to Your Majesty and satisfaction to myself to inform you likewise by mine own hand both how far I have proceeded and upon what motives; that in may appear unto Your Majesty (as I hope it will) an act of conscience and of reason, and not of greediness and ambition. Your Majesty will be therefore pleased to know, that I have lately taken the degree of deacon, and so far am I from aiming at any high flight, out of my former sphere, that there I intend to rest. Perhaps I want not some persuaders, that measuring me by their affections, or by your Majesty's goodness, and not by mine own defects or ends, would make me think, that yet before I die, I might become a great prelate, and I need no persuasion to tell me that if would undertake the pastoral function, I could, peradventure, by casualty, out of the patronages belonging to your Royal College, without further troubling Your Majesty, cast some good benefits upon myself, whereof we have one if it were vacant, that is worth more than my provostship. But as they were stricken with horror, who beheld the Majesty of the Lord descending upon the Mt. Sinai; so, God knows, the nearer I approach to contemplate his greatness, the more I tremble to assume any cure of souls even in the lowest degree,

* See page 342, Reliquiae, 1685 ;

Masson, page 683—1859 ed. Vol. I ;

Masson, page 737-9—1881 ed. Vol. I ;

†page 327 of Reliquiae.

that were bought at so high a price. Permant torcular qui vindemiarunt. Let them press the grapes, and fill the vessels, and taste the wine, that have gathered the vintage. But shall I sit and do nothing in the porch of God's house, whereunto I am entered? God himself forbid, who was the supreme mover. What service then do I propose to the church? Or what contentment to mine own mind? First from the point of conscience, I can now hold my place canonically, which I held before but dispensatively, and withal I can exercise an archidiaconal authority annexed thereunto, although of small extent, and no benefit, yet sometimes of pious and necessary use. I comfort myself also with this Christian hope, that gentlemen and knights' sons, who were trained up with us in a Seminary of Churchmen, (which was the will of the Holy Founder) will be my example, (without any vanity) not be ashamed, after the sight of Courtly Weeds, to put on a Surplice. Lastly, I consider, that the resolution which I have taken, is not unsuitable even to my civil employments abroad, of which for the most part Religion was the Subject; nor to my observations, which have been spent that way in discovery of the Roman Arts and Practices, whereof I hope to yield the World some account, though I most Humbly confess that both my Conceptions and Expressions be weak, yet I do more trust my deliberation than my memory: and if Your Majesty will give me leave to paint myself on higher Terms, I think, I shall be bolder against the judgments than against the faces of men. This I conceive to be a piece of my own character, so as my private study must be my Theatre rather than a Pulpit, and my Books my Auditors, as they are my Treasure. However, if I can produce nothing else for the use of the Church and State, yet it shall be comfort enough to the little remnant of my life to compose some hymns unto his endless glory who hath called me (for which his name be ever blessed) though late, to his service, yet early to the knowledge of His Truth, and sense of his mercy. To

which ever commanding Your Majesty and your Royal Actions, with my most hearty and humble prayers, I rest,
 Your Majesties
 most devoted
 poor servant.

Our original conception that the letter was addressed to a limited audience but that the essay was consciously written for publication certainly cannot stand against the evidence of intended publication of Bishop Hall's and James Howell's letters and the evident reflection, jotted in memoranda form, of Bacon's essays. Therefore we are compelled to consider the letter and essay as co-ordinate, if not co-equal. It is the opinion of Cross that it was from just such jottings as those of Pepys and Evelyn that the material for the eighteenth century novelists was collected.*

The journal of family life and interesting social and political events suggested the novel of family life, and indicated a form of narrative that would lend to fiction the appearance of fact. The journal of literary men's thoughts, reflections, provided material for the interest that now evinced itself with regard to great men, and prompted the writing of biographies. In 1640 Izaak Walton published the first of his charming *Lives*. An immediate offshoot of the biography was the autobiography. It also occurred to several writers after the Restoration that the letter form itself might be used to depict London life. Such a series of imaginary letters was the entertaining bundle of two hundred and eleven letters published in 1664 by Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle.†

In 1678 a new direction to letter writing was given by a translation from the French of the *Portuguese Letters*. These letters of a Portuguese nun to a French cavalier revealed to

*Cross, Development of the Novel, p. 22.

†Letters of Mary Mauley, 1664, 1696, 1678.

our writers how a correspondence might be managed to unfold a simple story. Edition after edition of the *Portuguese Letters* followed, and fictitious replies and counter replies. In the wake of these continuations, the *Letters of Heloise and Abelard* were translated into English, containing a similar but more pathetic tale. They, too, went through many editions, and were imitated, mutilated and trivialized. As a result of this fashion of letter writing, there existed in the eighteenth century a considerable body of short stories in letter form.*

One further point is of peculiar interest after our study of complete letter-writers. The booksellers, Rivington and Osborne, applied to Samuel Richardson to write for them a volume of letters in a simple style, on subjects that might serve as models for the use of those who had not the talent of inditing for themselves. While employed in composing some letters for the benefit of girls going out to service, the idea of *Pamela* came into Richardson's mind and the subsequent success of that novel caused him to continue the mode of telling his stories by letter.†

The art of correspondence in England and France ran parallel. The playful quality of the intellectual circles of France, which was restricted in religious and political matters, naturally turned upon local matters. The letter as the most free, familiar form of expression lent itself readily to these subjects. Even the slight restraint of common nationality disappeared when the device of representing the author as a foreigner was hit upon. It was supposed the views of the foreigner would be unbiassed by the ideas or associations

*Probably one of the earliest collections entitled a novel was *Eleonora, a Novel*, in a series of letters; written by a French inhabitant of Leeds in Yorkshire [i. e., Mrs. Gomersall]. London, 1699.

†See the correspondence of Samuel Richardson, A. L. Baubauld, London, 1804, 6 vol. Vol. I. pp. LXIX-LXXVI.

Also *Spectator* No. 375.

to which the mind of the native was habituated. The purpose was to show that manners and arts were not so near perfection as self-love and habit would make one believe and to express opinions, religious and political, with that entire disregard of restraint only to be tolerated in an outlandish character. Such was the purpose of the *Turkish Spy*, or *L'Esploratore Turco e le dilui relazioni segrete alla Porta ottomana, etc., Parigi*, 1684. This work had already appeared as early as 1664, and the eight volumes of letters written by a Turkish spy, * * * translated into Italian, from thence into English, published in 1734, 1753 and 1770. The *Persian Letters* of Montesquieu, were the most popular production of this class. Other similar productions were the *Jewish Spy*, by Marquis d'Argens, London, 1729; the *Chinese Spy*, by Marquis d'Argens, English translation, 1741; the *Peruvian Letters*, by Madam de Graffigny, English translation, London, 1771, 1782, 1805; Avignon, 1818, and *L'Espion Chinois*, A de Gondar.* These examples may be said to have culminated in England in Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*.

We have reviewed the contribution of the letter to the more permanent forms of literature, namely, the essay and the novel. There still remains a form of literature, temporary in its influence and existence, which sprung from the love of newsy letters—the news letters of the early part of the seventeenth century. This medium of intelligence England copied from a popular modern Continental form. The earliest publication of news letters appeared in Venice in 1566. It was the *Notizie Scritte*, published monthly in manuscript, not in print. It is said to have been the first of Italian newspapers. The term *Gazettes*, as the newspapers soon were called, arose from the practice of allowing a person, upon payment of a small coin known as *gazetta*, permission to read these manuscripts.

*For further productions see Dunlop's History of Prose Fiction, page 482.

Even before the death of Elizabeth, the Dutch possessed the *Mercurius Gallico-belgicus*, a paper which, after a crude fashion, set forth the political affairs of the times. The influence of this particular publication is seen in the numerous Mercuries published under Charles I. In fact, some historians have called the first of the seventeenth century "the era of the Mercuries." Such were the *Mercurie Pragmatical*, a journal printed in opposition, entitled *Anti-Mercurius Pragmaticus*; *Mercurius Bellicus, or an Alarm to all Rebels*; *Mercurius Melancholicus*, and Mercuries devoted to the medical profession. Probably the earliest publication of this type was the *Weekly Sheet*, 1619,* but James Grant says, "after running out various forgeries, we are compelled to recur to the conclusion that the earliest English newspaper, as we understand the term, was Butter's *Weekly News*, 1622."

Bourne considers that the large number of news-pamphlets produced, even under the rigid Tudor laws against unlicensed printing, should be considered in any general sketch of this form of literature.†

Some of these news pamphlets and news ballads were issued with the sanction, others in defiance, of the authorities. They were small quarto books of twelve or more pages, with no more than three or four hundred words on a page, and generally, when not reporting noteworthy occurrences in England, they merely translated or reproduced the summaries of foreign news writers. One of these publications entitled *News from Spain*, was "imprinted at London for Nathaniel Butter, 1611." Other examples are to be found scattered through the Stationers' Register, under various titles of "a letter out of some foreign country, or news letters out of the country."

**Körting, Grundriés der Geschichte d Engl. Litteratur*, p. 235 and Note 2.

†Bourne, *English Newspapers*, page 3, Vol. 1.

The first English journalists or writers of news letters were originally the dependents of great men. They were employed to keep their masters or patrons well informed, during their absence from court, of all that transpired there. The duty grew at length into a calling. The writer had his periodical subscription list, and, instead of writing a single letter, wrote as many letters as he had customers. Of such earlier news letters, good examples may be seen in Sir John Fenn's Collection of *Paston Letters*, and in Arthur Collins' *Letters and Memorials of State* (better known perhaps as the *Sidney Papers*). Of those of later date, specimens will be found in Knowler's *Letters and Dispatches of Strafford*. The manuscript news letters held their own until the middle of the last century. Many of them were written by men of marked ability, who had access to official information, and were able to write with great freedom and independence.

The attitude of literary men towards this growing literature is interesting. Burton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* edition of 1622 makes a remark to the effect that the only class of works which were then read, were plays and news-letters.* In 1625 Jonson brought out his drama called *The Staple of News*, the principal object of which was manifestly to hold up to ridicule the chief contemporary newspapers especially Nathaniel Butter's journals. Gifford, in a note, seems to be of the opinion that *The Staple of News* had been written immediately after the appearance of a few numbers of Butter's *Weekly News*, but its production on the stage was deferred for some unknown reason until 1625. Hardly less intense was the hostility towards news-letters and their proprietors which Fletcher manifested. He was even more personal than Jonson in his attacks on Butter. It seems Butter had been a stationer and failed before he took first

*ii., p. 94 and p. 97. Edition by Rev. A. R. Shillelo. London and New York, 1 3.

to news writing in manuscript letter and afterwards to news printing. It is in relation to this circumstance that Fletcher, in the *Fair Maid of the Inn*, says, "The ghost of some lying stationer, etc." The most telling hit is where the dramatist says "The spirit of Butter shall look as if butter would not melt in his mouth*." Shirley has much of the same enmity, † and a reference to a certain captain who seems to have turned his inventive faculties to account, and printed his imaginary correspondence, instead of detailing it *viva voce*."

The press was in its infancy in Jonson's days and the drama in the hands of Jonson and his contemporaries abounded in allusions to the fashions and follies of the day. The defects of the newspaper management were laughable. The first time that Jonson made admirable fun of the humors of a newspaper office was a masque, presented at court in 1625 entitled *News from the New World discovered in the Moon*.

*Mr. Fleay (Vol. I., p. 222) believes that the "allusions to Nat. Butter, the World, in the Moon and Amboyna, Act IV., 2, mark the scenes as Jonson's.

†Love Tricks, Act I, sce. i.

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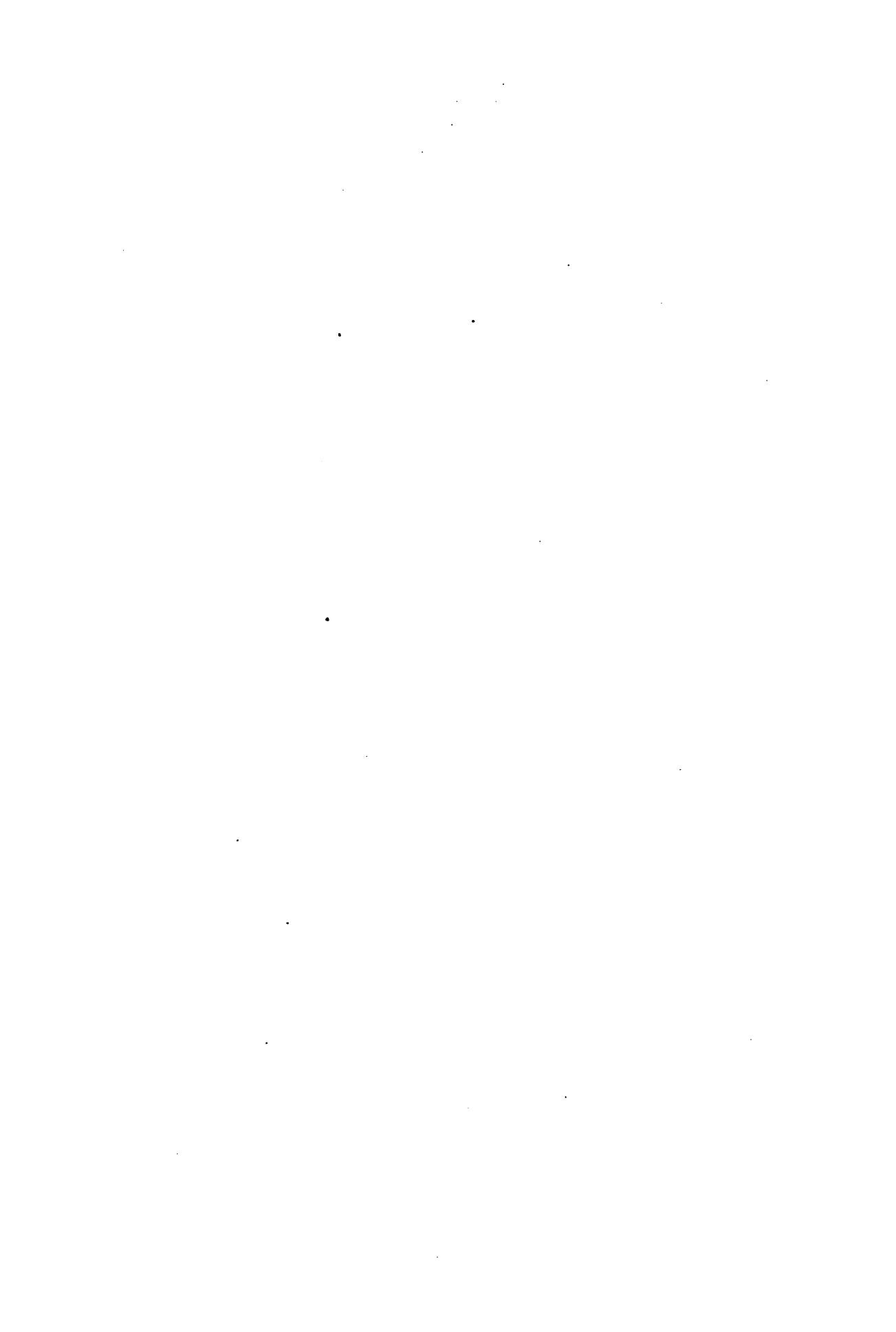
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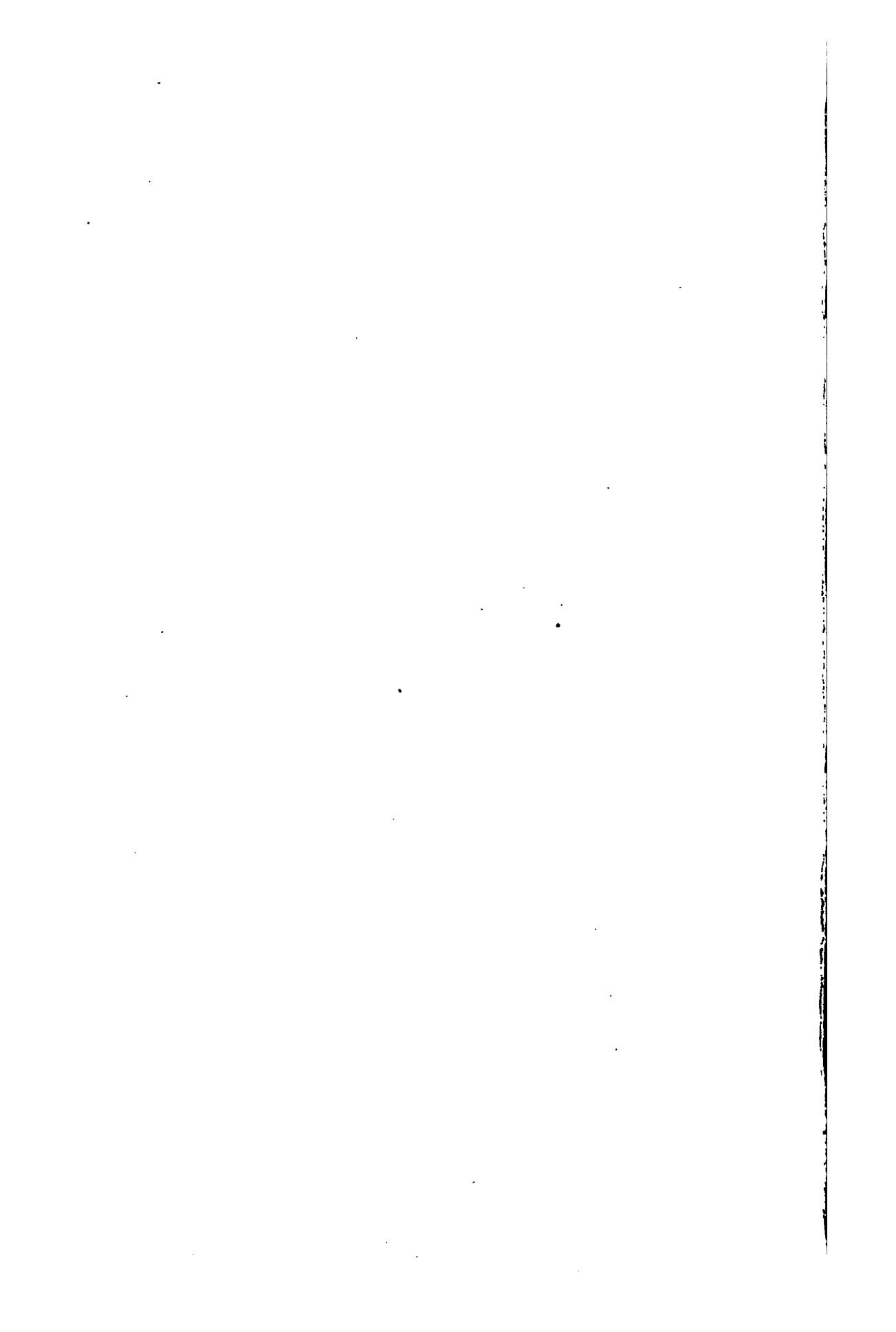
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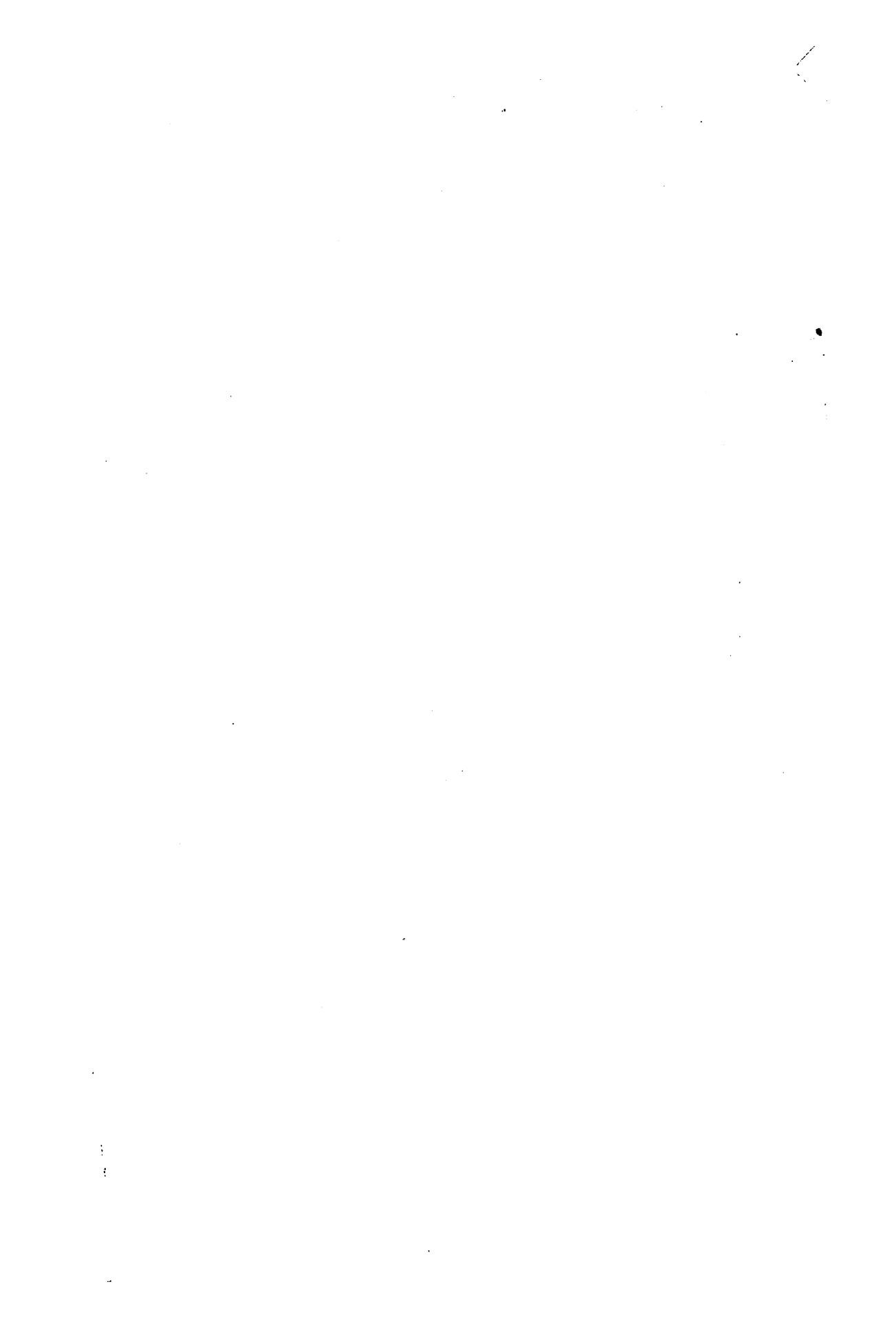
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